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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 002061

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SUBJECT: HATOYAMA CONFIDANTE ON UPCOMING HATOYAMA
ADMINISTRATION

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Classified By: DCM James P. Zumwalt per 1.4 (b/d)

Summary

¶1. (C) Ruling DPJ Diet member and Yukio Hatoyama confidante Yori-hisa Matsuno told Embassy Tokyo September 4 that the presumptive next Prime Minister's "'first priority'" will be to establish a close relationship with the United States and President Obama. To that end, Hatoyama had already turned down an invitation to visit China, arguing that "'I need to visit the United States first,'" Matsuno relayed. Matsuno also discussed Afghanistan and the Indian Ocean refueling mission and described Hatoyama's dislike of the Socialists, the possible domestic function of the National Strategy Bureau, the prominent role of Ichiro Ozawa as DPJ Secretary General and the low chances that the Hatoyama administration will make a bilateral issue of the so-called "'secret nuclear pact'" from 40 years ago. End Summary.

Close U.S. Relationship is First Priority

¶2. (C) DPJ Diet member and Hatoyama confidante Yori-hisa Matsuno told Embassy Tokyo Poloff September 4 that DPJ President Hatoyama is "'very pro-U.S.,"" but that his view on the United States and U.S.-Japan relationship had been skewed in the recent op-ed piece that ran in the New York Times. Matsuno said that under Hatoyama, the DPJ government's "'first priority'" will be to build a close relationship with the United States and President Obama, followed by achieving the promises related to domestic matters the party made in its manifesto, such as increasing the child allowance.

¶3. (C) Hatoyama understands well the importance of the United States to Japan, Matsuno continued. For example, China recently already offered Hatoyama an invitation to visit before Hatoyama's trip to the United States, but Hatoyama declined. Matsuno relayed that Hatoyama told him that "'President Obama has to be the first foreign leader I meet.'" Hatoyama is truly looking forward to meeting President Obama in the U.S., Matsuno said. Matsuno was also very happy to see that Hatoyama and Ambassador Roos "'hit it off'" during their September 3 meeting. Matsuno assessed that Hatoyama should have a direct channel to the Ambassador because the quickest way for Hatoyama to understand U.S. thinking is to communicate directly with the Ambassador.

Afghanistan and Refueling Mission

14. (C) On Afghanistan and the refueling issue, Matsuno explained that the DPJ first needs to understand "what the United States wants and needs." Matsuno argued that U.S. desiderata for Afghan reconstruction "must have changed" from the Bush administration to the Obama administration. Furthermore, while it is important to understand the needs of Afghanistan and Pakistan, the DPJ still needs to understand what the United States would have Japan do, Matsuno explained. He further emphasized that humanitarian assistance, rather than military assistance involving Japan's Self-Defense Forces, would be easier for the DPJ administration to pursue, considering its likely coalition relationship with Socialists. In any case, the Hatoyama administration will need to understand U.S. "needs" first, and then discuss how the two countries can cooperate.

Relationship with the Socialists

15. (C) On the DPJ's relationship with the Social Democratic Party (SDP), Matsuno clearly stated that Hatoyama "wants to get rid of any SDP presence in a coalition government as soon as possible." He believes that the SDP's influence in the coalition government would be very limited, as it only has seven seats in the Lower House. While true that the DPJ needs the SDP in the Upper House in order to have a majority there, "once the DPJ gets a majority in the Upper House, the relationship with the SDP is over," Matsuno stressed. For now, the SDP will need to voice loudly its policy positions in order to "prove that it is still alive," but that does not mean the party will have significant influence on government management and policy decisions, Matsuno explained.

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National Strategy Bureau

16. (C) Matsuno said that the focus of the DPJ-proposed National Strategy Bureau will be on domestic issues. The new organization, to be headed by Deputy Prime Minister (and seasoned bureaucrat basher) Naoto Kan, will cover some foreign and national security policy issues, but these will be limited and "most of the attention will be paid to domestic-focused ministries and their budgets and personnel" Matsuno said.

DPJ Secretary General Ozawa

17. (C) Matsuno said frankly that there were pros and cons to appointing former DPJ Party President Ichiro Ozawa as Secretary General. However, it is undeniable that Ozawa alone succeeded in getting 150 new DPJ members elected. The DPJ needs these members to be re-elected next time around, and Ozawa is the only person capable of doing this. He is also the only politician able to "keep in line" such a large group of first-termers.

"Secret Agreement" and Three Non-Nuclear Principles

18. (C) On the issue of the so-called "secret agreement" (from 40 years ago) between the United States and Japan to allow ships with nuclear weapons to pass through Japanese straits and enter ports, Matsuno said the DPJ's intention is "not to make this an issue with the United States." The DPJ understands that the USG has already disclosed the relevant information and publicly stated that the documents speak for themselves. "The problem is MOFA," Matsuno said. MOFA has tried to hide the existence of the agreement, and therefore the DPJ has to pursue this. "It is not about the United States," he stressed.

¶9. (C) On the possibility of legislating Japan's three non-nuclear principles (no production, possession or introduction), Matsuno said he was personally against it. Obviously, as President Obama said, our ultimate goal should be the elimination of nuclear weapons. That said, Matsuno predicted that the legislation of the three principles ""will not happen anytime soon."" The DPJ is realistic about this, he added.

Bio Note

¶10. (C) Matsuno is a 4th term Diet member from Kumamoto 1st district. His father, Raizo Matsuno, was former Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida's secretary and served as Labor Minister, Defense Agency head, and Agriculture Minister in the Kishi and Sato Cabinets, and had senior party jobs in the Miki Cabinet. Matsuno Jr. started his political career as a staffer in the New Frontier Party, then became a secretary to former PM Morihiro Hosokawa. Matsuno succeeded Hosokawa in his district and was first elected in 2000. Because Matsuno's father and Hatoyama's grandfather and father were close politically, Matsuno and Hatoyama are themselves close.

Matsuno is considered one of a small handful Diet members who have Hatoyama's ear on political and policy issues.

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